



***Special Session (SS08) on:***

***Selling the rural in the city: the role of rural provenance food products in reconfiguring new rural-urban connections and fostering territorial development***

**Organizers:**

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**The aim and scope:**

In the last few decades, research on food products has emphasised a global shift in consumers' preference for quality and differentiation of food products. The consumption of food is increasingly guided by a set of values and concerns (e.g. health, safety, environmental protection, authenticity, experiences) that render provenance rural food products more appealing. Besides the growing interest of (mainly urban) consumers in these products, there is also a wider policy support (namely within European Union) to their production and commercialization, as well as to their official certification (e.g. PDO; IGP) in the promotion of these foodstuffs distinctive character and provenance. Altogether, these processes demonstrate that provenance matters when it comes to food consumption, commercialization and production.

Parallel to the interest on rural provenance food products by the consumers there was a rise in the number of speciality or gourmet stores, located in urban centres, selling those foodstuffs to both urban residents and tourists. These stores may thus have an important role in fostering not only the promotion and consumption of rural provenance foods, but also new connections between various actors (retailers, distributors, producers and consumers). Furthermore, they may be working as modulating nodes in a web of symbolic and material links between rural places of production and urban spaces of consumption. Therefore, all these dynamics from production to consumption may also foster agriculture and rural tourism development, especially in Southern European Countries, as Portugal, where rural areas and agricultural activities experience a long-lasting process of decline. In this regard, a potential contribution to reconfiguring new rural-urban connections and fostering territorial development may also be identified.

In this Session, we aim to analyse and discuss the abovementioned issues, by inviting theoretical and empirical contributions, based on diverse approaches and cases from different countries, on – among others – the following topics:

- Rural provenance food certification processes
- Rural provenance food production and commercialization: EU and national-based policy support and tools
- Rural provenance food production and commercialization: traditional and innovative cultural practices
- Impacts of rural provenance food in agricultural and rural communities' development
- Impacts of rural provenance food on rural-based tourism development
- Dynamics and marketing of rural provenance food commercialization in urban settings
- Rural or urban based consumption of provenance products

**SUBMIT ABSTRACT**